

Samantha Sheesley
Buffalo State College

Artist Interviews for use in Conservation
including:
A Documented Interview with Siri Berg

Table of Contents

- 1. Introduction**
 - 1.1. AIC Code of Ethics and Guidelines for Practice**
 - 1.2. Negligence and Diligence**
 - 1.3. Moral Rights of Artists**
 - 1.4. Artist Intent**
- 2. Siri Berg**
 - 2.1. Siri Berg: Biographical Information**
 - 2.2. Siri Berg's Prepared Artist Statement**
 - 2.3. Siri Berg: Works of Art**
- 3. Interview**
 - 3.1. Preparation for Interview**
 - 3.2. Formal Interview with Siri Berg**
- 4. While the Camera was Off**
 - 4.1. Conversations with Siri Berg**
 - 4.2. Images from Siri Berg's Studio**
- 5. Conservation Treatment of Artwork by Siri Berg**
 - 5.1. Description of Piece**
 - 5.2. Consultation with Siri Berg**
 - 5.3. Treatment of Piece**
 - 5.4. Mock-up with Siri Berg's Materials**
 - 5.5. Continued Treatment**
 - 5.6. Workable Pressure-Sensitive Adhesive Solution**

- 6. Recommendations for Siri Berg**
 - 6.1. Workable Pressure-Sensitive Adhesive**
 - 6.2. Glazed Framing Display**
- 7. Results and Discussion**
- 8. Conclusion**
- 9. Acknowledgements**
- 10. References**
 - 10.1. Recorded Artist Interviews**
 - 10.2. Bibliography**
- 11. Sources of Materials**
- 12. Autobiographical Information**
- 13. Appendices**
 - 13.1. Siri Berg's Prepared Artist Statement**
 - 13.2. Initial Interview Questions asked via Email**
 - 13.3. Transcript of Formal Video Recorded Interview**
 - 13.4. Siri Berg's Resume**

1. Introduction

1.1. AIC Code of Ethics and Guidelines for Practice

The Code of Ethics provided by the American Institute for Conservation of Historic and Artistic Works states: “All actions of the conservation professional must be governed by an informed respect for the cultural property, its unique character and significance, and the people of person who created it.” (AIC 1994) Though simply stated, such considerations are difficult to define, let alone practice. In the case of contemporary works of art, the governing respect for an art object and its unique character, to a great degree, is characterized and qualified by its author. A work of art is fully realized and completed when encountered by and interpreted by a viewer. However, this interpretation is compounded by biases of the viewer. (Dykstra 1996) When the interpreter of an artwork is a conservator, false impressions can lead to misguided practice. Therefore, it is of the utmost importance that a conservation professional exhausts every avenue to find the most reliable details before making treatment decisions.

1.2. Negligence and Diligence

Negligent practice can be extraordinarily detrimental to the merit of a work of art. Gross negligence is defined as “a conscious, voluntary act of omission in reckless disregard of a legal duty and of the consequences to another party, who may typically recover exemplary damages.” (Garner 2001) Due diligence is defined as “the diligence reasonably expected from, and ordinarily exercised by, a person who seeks to satisfy a legal requirement or to discharge an obligation.” (Garner 2001) When followed, the AIC Code of Ethics and Guidelines for Practice have set ethical precedents for conservation practice. These guidelines describe and promote diligent practice as a defense against accusations of gross negligence. The AIC Code of Ethics also stresses the magnitude associated with familiarity of laws and regulations surrounding the rights of artists.

1.3. Moral Rights of Artists

The Visual Artists Rights Act is a federal law adopted in 1990, which protects the moral rights of artists. (Broderson 1991) Moral rights include: the right to attribution, and the

right to integrity. These rights legally guarantee an artist's association with a work he or she has created, and protects that work from modification which could tarnish the artist's reputation. (Broderson 1991)

If a work of art is damaged, altered or neglected in such a way that the artist's intent is obscured, the caretaker can be held legally responsible. Conservators whose interventions alter a work can be held liable for damages if an artist feels that his or her concept has been lost during a conservation treatment. As mentioned, it is the right of the artist to sue to remove his or her name from a work of art. Since the value of a work of art is its association with the artist, the piece loses its market value once its ties to that artist are severed. If the loss in value can be attributed to a conservation treatment, the conservator can be held responsible for restitution to the owner.

1.4. Artist Intent

Contemporary artists experimenting with unusual materials have no unified concept, aesthetic or precedent to follow. Many contemporary artists experiment with a variety of materials, many of which were not manufactured for art's sake. Many pieces composed of found-objects include industrial and consumer products manufactured to fail and decompose. In certain instances, ephemeral materials help to illustrate the artist's concept. Some products of an artistic process are meant to progress through a life cycle, concluding with its physical demise.

Artists who base their material selections on certain mechanical and aesthetic qualities may have little regard or knowledge of the materials' nature or stability. A good conservator will find a way to treat a damaged object without falsifying, imitating or competing with the touch of the artist. If the author of a damaged artwork is available for consultation, the law and good sense suggests that the artist should guide a conservator towards a treatment consistent with the author's desired aesthetic. A discussion should be had about the use of materials analogous to the damaged object, since using them for repairs and retouching could be nearly imperceptible.

Throughout the course of a treatment, a conservator dealing with contemporary works of art must exert every effort to protect the moral rights of artists. Clarification of abstract information would diminish the potential for misinterpretation, which could otherwise lead to misguided treatment decisions. (Coddington 1998) In many instances involving contemporary art, the artist can be consulted during the course of examination and treatment of a work of art. Conversations between the artist and the conservator will ensure that the artist's intent is maintained. Through documented artist interviews, artists would be able to define their materials, processes and concepts for conservation and scholarly review. The documentation of such conversations can help to better inform future conservators of the artist's attitude toward the work and its preservation. (Coddington 1998)

An artist interview conducted for the benefit of conservators should engage the artist in his or her artwork. The line of questions should help to lead the artist towards answers which will inform conservators of the artist's attitude towards conservation when faced with treatments. Video and/or audio records would provide future conservators and scholars with a context otherwise lost in mere transcription. Importantly, the overall attitude of the artist with regards to the artwork is crucial and can serve to inform conservation practice, even when certain technical details may have been forgotten.

2. Siri Berg

In order to better illustrate the merit of artist interviews within the field of conservation, I conducted an interview with an artist named Siri Berg.

2.1. Siri Berg: Biographical Information

Siri Berg was born in Stockholm, Sweden. At the age of 19, she visited New York City. She recalls that during that visit, she informed her parents that New York was to be her home. True to her word, she did not return to Sweden. Instead she was joined by her parents in New York. Although she has been a resident artist of New York City for years, she maintains a very close relationship with her homeland. She continues to exhibit her work in numerous Swedish galleries and museums. Berg is also

internationally acclaimed, having shown her work in Germany, Spain, Israel, Australia and China. Her work has been represented by various galleries throughout the United States and exhibited in museums including the Swedish American Museum in Philadelphia, PA; the Robert C. Williams American Museum of Paper Making in Atlanta, GA; the Smithsonian Hirshhorn Museum in Washington, D.C.; and the Guggenheim's Jewish Museum in New York, NY. Berg divides her time between working in her studio and teaching young artists and designers at the Parson School of Design.

2.2. Siri Berg's Prepared Artist Statement:

I sometimes identify myself as a paper carpenter, crafting collages out of the world's most common medium, paper. Because of the universal nature of these materials, I enjoy the freedom of being able to explore and experiment with the visual richness and subtlety achieved by working with my Japanese method of woodblock prints.

I begin my pieces by selecting white or naturally colored handmade paper from around the world. The paper are cut, soaked in water and dried between large blotters. When they reach the appropriate dampness, they are ready for the printing process using carved woodblocks.

The printing colors are made from transparent and opaque paints and or watercolors. The subject of the collage dictates the choice of paint. The first print is a layer of silver or copper metallic paint. Multiple layers of prints are added to the paper.

The printed papers are composed to form collages.

I use color, texture, design and movement to express feelings and moods. My hope is that the textures vibrating through the papers juxtaposed against flat surfaces will speak to us and remind us of the constant opposition with which we are faced.

2.3. Siri Berg: Works of Art

Berg's work is divided into three distinct categories: oil paintings on canvas, paper collages, and found object assemblages. Her individual panels are usually hung in organized grids, for example, sixteen objects hung on a wall in a four by four pattern. Berg is careful to induce uniformity among the pieces she groups by mounting the objects to stretchers of a consistent size and depth. She may also color the stretchers or frames to further the coherence of a group. She is particularly attentive to the subtle texture of her surfaces: the way a material holds paint or ink, and how it appears to activate the material and media next to it. Each piece articulates Berg's vision in a different way; each benefits from proximity to its neighbors.

Siri Berg describes herself as a "paper carpenter", and indeed she is an impeccable craftsman. Her paper collages are created from printed paper pieces that are neatly cut to fit perfectly and lock in place with another. Berg uses papers from around the world carefully selected for their texture and surface quality. Her primary suppliers for paper are New York Central Art Supply, Pearl Paint and Kate's Paperie in New York City. Some papers are used as found while others are further decorated by the artist prior to incorporation in a collage. For example, Berg uses woodblock printing to color and impart designs to some sheets.

Her knowledge of this process from came through study with Kathy Caraccio, an American who learned woodblock printing in Kyoto, Japan. Traditionally, Japanese woodblock artists specialize in three areas: design, cutting, and printing of the images. Berg, however, executes every stage of the process herself. She feels intimately connected to each of her prints, as she has worked through each phase of the prints' creation. Many of her prints receive numerous layers of ink, from different blocks.

Once the prints are made, she spends a great deal of time sizing, cutting and composing the pieces. Berg's adhesive preference is UHU glue sticks, which are marketed as "archival", and are relatively neat, clean and quick to use for the artist. She is pleased with the glue sticks' workable quality, allowing her to reposition collage elements as necessary. The paper elements are adhered to a paper mount with glue stick, which is in

turn adhered to a rigid paper support. The paper board is attached to wood stretchers that are painted for presentation.



Berg's layout for large collage series

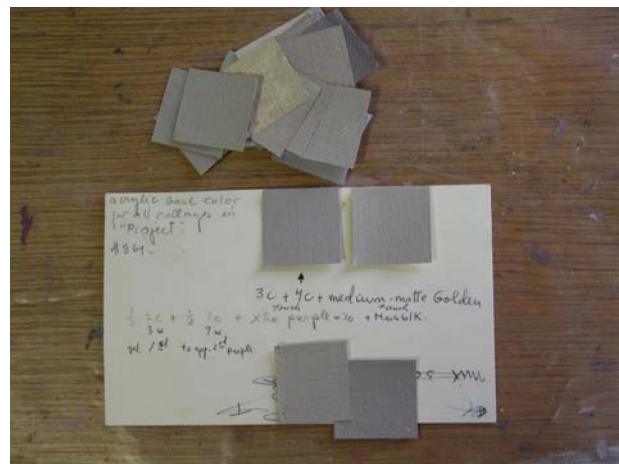


Berg's adhesives and fixatives

Siri Berg has developed two cataloging systems. The first keeps detailed records including a thumbnail sketch of each piece, along with its catalog number, the dimension of every piece, the medium, the colors, the year, the pattern, a photograph, problems, collector, and notes. The second system is a detailed registry of materials, including color swatches, samples, sketches, thoughts and images of each piece. Together these catalogs provide important information about the provenance, processes and aesthetics of Berg's work.



Page from Berg's catalog



Berg's index card with paint samples

3. Interview

3.1. Preparation for Interview

This project has given Siri Berg an opportunity to state her artistic visions and intentions so that they may be preserved along with her objects and material catalogs. The included documented conversations about her work will inform conservators and art historians of her attitude towards the objects and their preservation for the future. Samples of the paper and colorants used by Berg have been included to assist in analysis and comparison for compatible and imperceptible repairs to her collages.

Much consideration was given to the execution of the interview. I thought it would be beneficial to prepare Siri Berg by submitting a list of questions and considerations. This list also helped me to focus on issues of importance to the conservation field. The initial line of questions was emailed to Siri Berg before visiting her studio. With little explanation of conservation's goals, capabilities and concerns, Berg supplied very short, nondescript answers.

For example, one line of questions focused on conservation intervention and loss integration. Her verbal response to loss integration during our later conversations was very different from her early written correspondence.

In an email exchange, I wrote to ask her when she thought conservation intervention was necessary, she replied:

When I cannot safely do it myself

When questioned about the extent to which conservation should be imposed, she answered:

To the closest of the artist's intention

When asked what level of retouching she wished to see, she responded:

Minimum, if any is necessary

3.2. Formal Interview with Siri Berg

During my subsequent visit to Berg's studio, I described different degrees of loss integration. I explained the benefits and short-comings of each technique. And, based upon our conversations, I commented during the interview that she seemed remarkably open to material suggestions from conservators and technical advisors. Her response was:

I think it's very helpful, very helpful, to actually have consulted you, and spoken to you. You have actually shown me that I've neglected that avenue of getting information. Absolutely. Because, you need the technical advisors to paint companies. And you certainly need to speak to a conservator. . . I mean I'm open to it, but I might not make the final decision in the best interest of the artwork, but I think it's important to try.

I went on to inquire about damages and loss integration. I described various levels of inpainting, and questioned the degree of restoration she wished to apply to her work. Her reply was:

I think in general, that would have to apply to the individual piece, about what's necessary to start out. But, my feeling is that I would like it to be unnoticeable that it has been touched up and repaired. I think that I want total visual impact to benefit for the audience, the way that it was intended. Therefore I think I would like it to look as much as possible like the rest of that area or the entire piece. And, I think what I'm gathering is that conservators have the ability to copy and I am thoroughly impressed with that. I think I would like as much as possible for it to be of that quality. I'd like that, I like it the best. For the benefit of the audience. I think I would find it disturbing if you see a tear there. You lose the impact. You lose the impression that you get . . . I like the drama of seeing the work complete. That's my feeling, that it should be continued . . . if it's possible, to copy it the way it was made, so that you're not aware of the repair.

The formal interview was conducted in Siri Berg's studio, located in her Soho apartment. I selected the camera's position based upon Berg's comfort. To sooth her nerves I found it helpful to place the camera at a slight distance. To prepare, we outlined a few topics of interest, and gathered some visual examples to serve as props. Distance from our table also allowed the camera to include some of Berg's hanging collages in the picture. Our preparation for the recorded interview ensured a comfortable situation, allowing us to focus on our conversation.



Still from documented interview with Siri Berg

4. While the Camera was Off

4.1. Conversations with Siri Berg

In preparation for the formal interview, Siri Berg and I spent several days together in her studio. During that time, she spoke about her experiences, inspirations and creations. Each object referenced and illustrated a different point through process. Her words were enlightening, but watching her interact with her pieces was far more valuable. Siri Berg

grew to understand that as the gaps between artist and conservator were bridged, the artwork became the beneficiary. As a result, her interest in the project heightened, and the breadth of her answers grew. At the close of our last day together, after the formal interview had been conducted, Siri Berg affectionately referred to me as “the person she trusts most with her artwork”.

Material recommendations are a bit controversial among the conservation field. Some conservators believe that artists should continue producing work as they always have, unaffected by conservation and preservation concerns. Conservators have knowledge to share. If an artist asks, we can tell them and advocate for better materials. The artist would then have options from which to choose.

Siri Berg was asked about her material selections, and whether she was interested in recommendations from conservators. She enthusiastically welcomes advice from conservators, although she admits that she will not sacrifice the overall effect or tactile quality of a work of art. Throughout her career, she has contacted and questioned technical advisors of art material manufacturers, such as Grumbacher and Golden. Berg wants each piece to survive, and takes responsibility for their longevity by seeking out archival materials.

Recently, Siri Berg’s adhesive of choice has become unavailable. Image permanence and quality materials have always been a priority in her working practice, and she invited adhesive recommendations. She found the conservation field to be a wealth of information, and proceeded to inquire about adhesives, support boards, varnishes, and display options. She described her exhibition aesthetics, but expressed concerns about the liability that her aesthetics created for gallery owners and curators. Ideally, she wished to display her collages in such a way that the delicate surfaces were protected, but so that the intimate viewing experience was not disrupted by glass.

4.2. Images from Siri Berg’s Studio



One of Berg's woodblocks



Berg's watercolors



Berg's various colorants



Berg's metallic paints



Berg's woodblock with prints and tools



One of Berg's paper collages



Series of collages, paintings and assemblages in studio



Modular system installed at Yellow Bird Gallery in Newburgh, NY

5. Conservation Treatment of Artwork by Siri Berg

While visiting Siri Berg's studio in New York City, I was able to look at numerous collages, paintings and assemblages. Berg learns through trial and error, as she continues to experiment with new media and supports. One successful drawing suffered an unfortunate fate as adhesive was applied to it. Because the drawing was executed on tracing paper, it expanded considerably as the water-based glue stick introduced moisture into the sheet. Innumerable tight creases and cockles were spread across the paper, diminishing the impact of the drawing. Because Berg felt that the moment had passed, she could not recreate the piece. After discussing the treatment with her, we established a target result, and I packaged the piece for transport to Buffalo.

5.1. Description of Piece

The piece is composed of a crayon drawing on tracing paper, and an oil painting on a canvas swatch. The canvas overlapped the tracing paper slightly, and both were mounted overall to a thick white paper, similar to blotter paper. The object measured 15 x 15". Both the tracing paper and the canvas are divided into seven 2" bands, aligning with one another so that the bands continued across the two supports. One of seven colors was applied to each band: purple, carmine, scarlet, vermillion, orange, yellow and lemon yellow. The canvas was painted out in solid bands of color, while the tracing paper was

colored by a series of long, wavy crayon lines. Although the media differed on each support, the colors applied to the tracing paper matched those on the canvas.



Before Treatment, Front
Normal Illumination



Before Treatment, Front
Raking Illumination



Before Treatment, Back

Normal Illumination

5.2. Consultation with Siri Berg

Fortunately, this piece was assigned a number (#1301), and its information had been cataloged by Berg. Unable to recall the exact materials from memory, Berg checked her references to tell me that the crayons used in the drawing were *Caran d'Ache – Artists' Colors, Neocolor II*. The other portion of the piece was composed of two coats of oil paint mixed with turpentine and dammar on Hyplar.

Before treatment began, Berg was consulted. She stated that the mount was not important to the work of art. It simply provided a base onto which the design elements could be combined and attached. Because it was not integral to the piece, she was not concerned with its condition. She gave permission to replace the mount with an alternate material. (However, the original mount was successfully maintained throughout the treatment.) The adhesive was tested along the margins of the paper mount, and was confirmed to be water-soluble. Unfortunately, the crayon was also water-soluble, and extreme caution was exercised to protect the drawing.

5.3. Treatment of Piece

Because the canvas overlapped the tracing paper, the painted portion of the design had to be removed in order to remove the drawing from the mount. The canvas was partially mechanically removed from the paper mount with a spatula. Once a sufficient amount of the canvas had been lifted from its mount, the detached end was wrapped around a cardboard tube (covered by glassine), and the remaining canvas was lifted from the mount as the tube was carefully rolled. This technique maintained even tension across the canvas, preventing distortions in the paint film. The canvas portion was easily separated from the mount with little damage to the mount paper.

The tracing paper was then tested for mechanical separation. Due to the delicate nature of the tracing paper, the drawing could not be safely removed from its mount by

mechanical means alone. It was therefore humidified between Gortex, with a damp blotter placed under the art work, and a piece of Mylar covered the entire package. This system allow for continual humidification from below as the tracing paper was slowly removed in small sections. Once humid, the adhesive softened, and a microspatula slid easily between the tracing paper and its mount. Because the adhesive was soft and tacky, strips of silicon release paper were laid between the drawing and mount to prevent reattachment. Once the tracing paper was completely removed from its mount, the adhesive was air dried and was no longer sticky.



Preparation for humidification



Gortex, polyester web, damp blotter and Mylar package



Beginning to lift tracing paper from mount



During removal of tracing paper from mount



Insertion of silicone release paper between drawing and mount



After removal of tracing paper from mount, drying on silicone release paper



During Treatment, Tracing Paper
Normal Illumination



During Treatment, Tracing Paper
Raking Illumination



During Treatment, Painting
Normal Illumination



During Treatment, Painting
Raking Illumination



During Treatment, Mount
Normal Illumination



During Treatment, Mount
Raking Illumination

In an attempt to reduce the tight creases and considerable adhesive residues from the tracing paper, the drawing was float washed for a few minutes on a bath of deionized water (pH 8.0, treated with calcium hydroxide). The drawing was air dried on sheets of polyester web. The tight creases diminished, however the paper surface was still very cockled and distorted.

5.4. Mock-up with Siri Berg's Materials

The crayon drawing was extremely sensitive to water, and transferred to the slickest of surfaces under very slight pressure. Siri Berg was consulted, and permission was given to fix the sensitive media onto the tracing paper. For testing purposes, the same *Caran d'Ache – Artist's Colors* were purchased, and Berg supplied additional pieces of tracing paper. A drawing was prepared from the same media and paper Berg used for fixative and flattening tests. A 2.5% solution of B-72 in Xylenes was applied to the surface of the mock-up through a spray gun. The mock-up received ten coats of the dilute fixative. Between each application, the fixative was dried and tested. A damp swab was rolled over the fixed crayon in one area and a dry blotter was burnished over the fixed media in another. The fixed media remained sensitive to water, but appeared stable to pressure.



Mock-up before fixative application,
Normal Illumination



Mock-up before fixative application
Raking Illumination



Mock-up after fixative application,
Normal Illumination



Mock-up after fixative application,
Raking Illumination

5.5. Continued Treatment

Because Siri Berg's drawing extended to the edges of the tracing paper, it could not be secured by pins or edge strips. Due to the water-sensitivity of the media, hinges could not be safely attached and removed. So, Berg's drawing was secured on the suction table in the spray booth while it was sprayed with B-72. This allowed the fixative to effectively coat the entire surface of the drawing while securing the thin paper in place. Berg's drawing received ten coats of a 2.5% solution of B-72 in Xylenes, as determined by the test described above.



Set-up for fixative application,
Berg's drawing



Application of fixative to
Berg's drawing

After the fixative dried, the tracing paper was humidified in a chamber above deionized water for thirty minutes. It was then dried in a stack between pieces of polyester web and cotton rag board under weight to restore planarity to the sheet. After two days, the drawing was removed from the stack, and the humidification and flattening process was repeated.



Berg's drawing before fixing and
flattening, Normal Illumination



Berg's drawing before fixing and
flattening, Raking Illumination



Berg's drawing after fixing and flattening,
Normal Illumination



Berg's drawing after fixing and flattening,
Raking Illumination

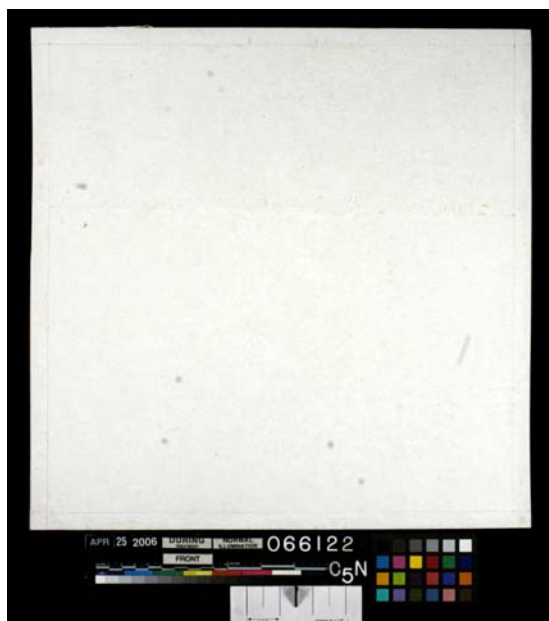
The thick mount paper was sticky and soiled as a result of adhesive residues. To reduce these residues, it was floated on a bath of deionized water (pH 8.0, treated with calcium hydroxide) for thirty minutes. It was removed on a piece of polyester web, air-dried on a screen, and then examined. The paper's appearance improved considerably, but remained somewhat tacky. It was then immersed in a bath of deionized water (pH 8.0, treated with calcium hydroxide) for thirty minutes. It was removed on a piece of polyester web, and placed in a fresh deionized water bath. After thirty minutes, it was removed on a piece of polyester web, and air-dried on a screen. The adhesive and soiling had been dramatically reduced. The mount paper was then humidified in a chamber over deionized water for thirty minutes. It was then dried in a stack between pieces of polyester web under weight to restore its planarity.



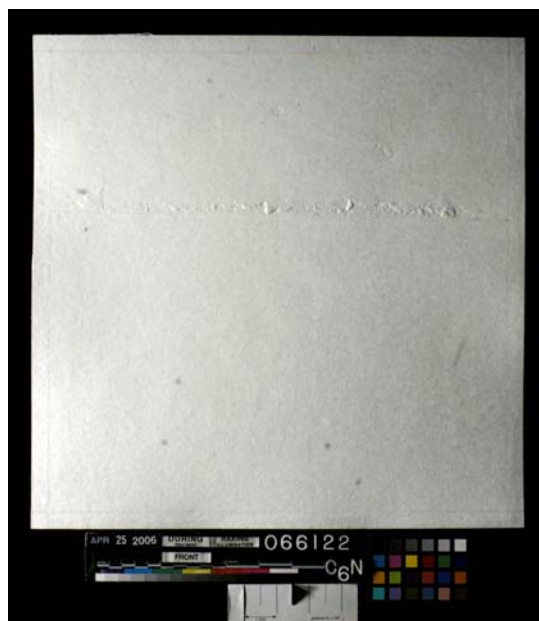
Mount before treatment,
Normal Illumination



Mount before treatment,
Raking Illumination



Mount after treatment,
Normal Illumination



Mount after treatment,
Raking Illumination

5.6. Workable Pressure-Sensitive Adhesive Solution

To prevent the expansion of the tracing paper which had caused the original creases and deformations, a non-aqueous adhesive was sought out to re-adhere the elements to the

mount. A secondary goal was to find an adhesive with “workable” qualities, which Berg could use in place of the UHU glue sticks, since they are no longer available to her.

A thin sheet of Japanese tissue (Mino) was selected to serve as a pressure-sensitive adhesive carrier. It was laid on top of silicone mylar while Lascaux 360 was scooped into a plastic bag, and piped in even rows across the tissue. A second sheet of silicone mylar was placed over the tissue and Lascaux 360. A long cardboard tube was rolled over the mylar package, evenly distributing the Lascaux across the surface of the tissue. The silicone mylar was removed from the top of the package, and mat board swatches were gently dragged over the Lascaux 360 surface to ensure a thin, uniform coating before air drying.



Lascaux 360 piped across tissue



Lascaux 360 rolled between sheets of
silicone mylar

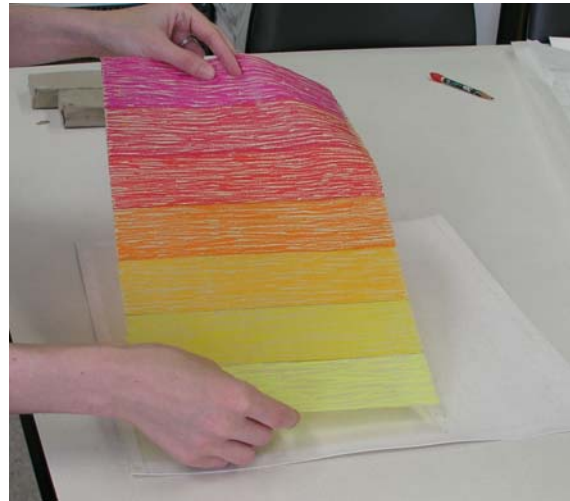


Lascaux 360 smoothed with mat board
swatches

Once dry, another piece of silicone mylar was laid over the Lascaux 360 coated tissue. The exact measurements of the tracing paper drawing by Berg were noted and drawn onto the mylar cover sheet. A piece of the coated tissue was cut to fit perfectly under the tracing paper support. The top piece of mylar was removed from the cut Lascaux 360 sheet, and positioned face-down on the mount. The placement of the Lascaux 360 sheet was determined by images taken of Berg's piece before treatment began. Once situated, the Lascaux 360 coated tissue was pressed into contact with the mount paper through the remaining piece of silicone mylar. The other piece of mylar was removed from the coated tissue, revealing the smooth surface of the Lascaux 360 coated paper. Berg's drawing on tracing paper was carefully positioned over the Lascaux 360 coated tissue. The coated tissue provided sufficient workable qualities, as the delicate tracing paper support was easily lifted and repositioned repeated times. Once it was properly oriented, it was pressed into contact with the adhesive sheet through a piece of silicone release paper. A second piece of Lascaux 360 coated tissue was cut to fit under the painted element of Berg's piece. It was positioned on the mount, pressed into contact, and received the painted element of the piece as described above. With all elements in place, the piece was put in a press between sheets of silicone release paper and rag board to provide sufficient adhesion.



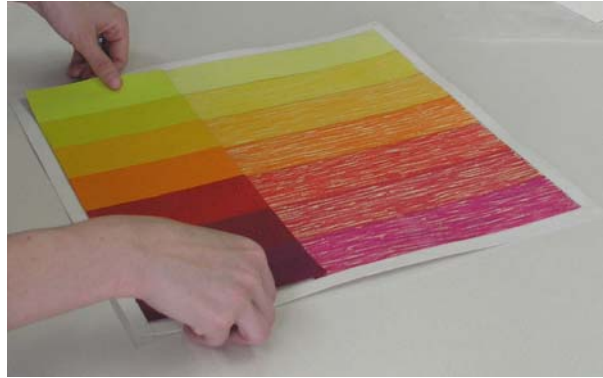
Removal of mylar from Lascaux 360 sheet



Positioning of Berg's drawing on Lascaux
360 tissue



Pressing of Berg's drawing into contact with the adhesive sheet



Positioning of painting over second Lascaux 360 adhesive sheet



Berg's piece after treatment,
Normal Illumination



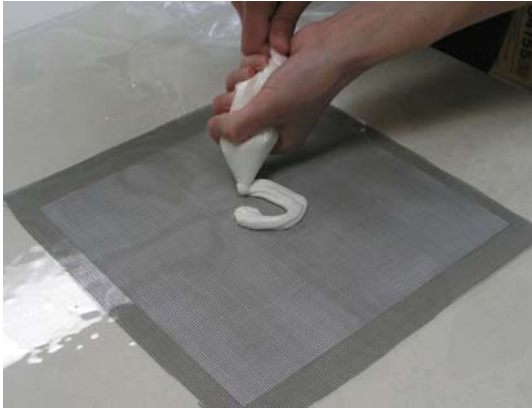
Berg's piece after treatment,
Raking Illumination

6. Recommendations for Siri Berg

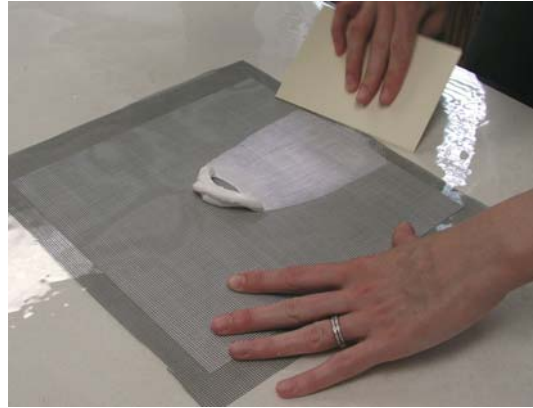
6.1. Workable Pressure-Sensitive Adhesive

A simplified system for the use of Lascaux 360 as a workable pressure-sensitive adhesive was worked out for Berg's studio use. A piece of window screening was placed over a mount paper. Several dollops of Lascaux 360 were placed on the screen and quickly spread across the surface with swatches of mat board. The screen created a uniform layer of adhesive across the mount. This procedure will allow Berg to neatly apply adhesive

evenly across her mount. Once the Lascaux 360 dries, she can position and remove paper elements as she sees fit. The adhesive bond will be made permanent only after the collage is placed under sufficient weight.



Application of Lascaux 360 to screen-covered mount



Even delivery of Lascaux 360 through screen

6.2. Glazed Framing Display

Because Berg is not pleased with the distracting reflections caused by glass, she has been experimenting with display systems which discontinue the use of glazing altogether. Due to the subtle and delicate qualities associated with her work, damages due to exposure and physical contact would result in disfiguring distractions. To protect her collages, and to better inform Siri Berg of new innovations in glazing, her piece was framed with anti-reflective, UV absorbing Museum Glass by TruVue.



Collage after treatment, framed with UV absorbing, anti-reflective
Museum Glass by TruVue

7. Results and Discussion

Much consideration was given to the execution of this interview. In the end, I thought it would be beneficial to prepare Siri Berg by submitting a list of questions and considerations. Originally, this list helped me to focus on issues of importance to the conservation field. Many of the interviews I reviewed focused on the context of the work, highlighting the creative process, with mention of materials and technique. I appreciated Carol Mancusi-Ungaro's preparation through material and technical mock-ups prior to each of her interviews. She used the spotlighted artist's materials of choice to create pieces similar to that of the artist. I found her understanding of the qualities and limitations of the selected materials very informative, and made for an interesting line of questions. However, a great number of other artist interviews that I researched did not cover many issues relevant to conservation. It seemed that the interviewed artists were not prepared with a line of questions ahead of time, and therefore they seemed to speak of personal interests.

My goal was to force the artist to focus on conservation concerns. My hope was to conduct and document an interview that could answer conservation questions in the future. Looking back on my documentation, I see a progression in dialogue, understanding, and trust. I outlined concerns about the aging of the objects, and the dilemmas posed during treatments. For example, I described the different degrees of loss re-integration, and explained the benefits and short-comings of each technique. Afterwards, Berg was able to make an informed decision about future retouching of her artwork.

8. Conclusions

The formal interview documents forty-two minutes of conversation between an artist and a conservator. It was an attempt to summarize months of investigation, focusing on the most pertinent information. However, all that I learned from Siri Berg, and all that she learned from me, took place while the camera was off. In addition to the months of email correspondence and phone conversations, we spent several days in her studio discussing issues and questioning one another. The relationship forged from this endeavor has been mutually beneficial to Siri Berg and me. She learned more about conservators' capabilities, and how she (and her legacy) can benefit from conservators' skills and resources. I learned how she employs process and combines elements to materialize her visions. This knowledge has informed me of how she would like her work treated and preserved. The documentation of our conversations and her interactions with the artwork will inform others similarly.

9. Acknowledgements

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Kimberly Schenck

J. Ryan Hunsberger

My Family

My Classmates

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11. Sources of Materials

Hyatt's All Things Creative

910 Main St, Buffalo, NY

Caran d'Ache Artists' Colors, Neocolor II

Elmwood Framing and Interiors

245 Elmwood Ave, Buffalo, NY

Frame

TruVue Museum Glass

Kate's Paperie

561 Broadway, New York, NY

New York Central Art Supply

62 3rd Ave, New York, NY

Pearl Paint

308 Canal St, New York, NY

UHU Glue Sticks

Hyplar

Rohm & Haas

Philadelphia, PA

Paraloid B-72

TruVue

9400 W 55th St, McCook, IL

Talas

20 W 20th St, #5, New York, NY

Silicone Release Paper

W. L. Gore & Associates

Elkton, MD

*Gortex Barrier***12. Autobiographic Information**

Samantha Sheesley is a 2007 graduate from the Buffalo State College graduate Art Conservation program, specializing in the conservation of works of art on paper. After completing her year-long internship in the Lunder Conservation Center's paper lab at the Smithsonian American Art Museum, Samantha is currently working at the Conservation Center for Art and Historic Artifacts in Philadelphia as an NEA Fellow. Samantha spent the summer of 2006 in the paper conservation lab at the Museum of Modern Art in New York City, and the summer of 2005 in the icon paintings conservation lab at the Benaki Museum in Athens, Greece. Before graduate school, she gained pre-program experience at the Philadelphia Museum of Art and at the Belmont Hills Art Conservation Studio in Philadelphia. Samantha received her BFA from Temple University's Tyler School of Art in Philadelphia, with a major in sculpture and a minor in art history. Samantha can be reached at samsheesley@hotmail.com.

13. Appendicies**13.1. Siri Berg's Prepared Artist Statement**

I sometimes identify myself as a paper carpenter, crafting collages out of the world's most common medium, paper. Because of the universal nature of these materials, I enjoy the freedom of being able to explore and experiment with the visual richness and subtlety achieved by working with my Japanese method of woodblock prints.

I begin my pieces by selecting white or naturally colored handmade paper from around the world. The paper are cut, soaked in water and dried between large blotters. When they reach the appropriate dampness, they are ready for the printing process using carved woodblocks.

The printing colors are made from transparent and opaque paints and or watercolors. The subject of the collage dictates the choice of paint. The first print is a layer of silver or copper metallic paint. Multiple layers of prints are added to the paper.

The printed papers are composed to form collages.

I use color, texture, design and movement to express feelings and moods. My hope is that the textures vibrating through the papers juxtaposed against flat surfaces will speak to us and remind us of the constant opposition with which we are faced.

13.2. Initial Interview Questions Asked via Email

1. What papers do you use?

SB: Any – looking for textural contrast

2. Where do you purchase them?

SB: Any – Pearl Paint, Kate's, NY Central, Paper Source Cambridge Mass, etc.

3. What qualities do you look for in your papers?

SB: Diversity, texture . . .

4. What would you like to have preserved?

SB: All

5. What adhesives do you use?

SB: Neutral PH Lineco, UHU Glue Stick

6. What qualities do you look for in your adhesives?

SB: Those that produce the least amount of moisture and buckling

7. What colorants do you use?

SB: Watercolors and gouache, oils

8. What qualities do you look for in your colorants?

SB: Certain brands, specific colors

9. What combinations of materials can be found within a single piece?

SB: A broad variety . . . Assemblages – Industrial found objects, support paper, metals, paint

10. Do you have aesthetic concerns with regards to aging of your materials?
(Discoloration, fading, staining, failure . . .)

SB: YES – discoloration and fading

11. How do you feel about the balance achieved through color relationships in your work?

SB: Very strongly

12. How do your support papers function? (As a quiet background?)

SB: At times a quiet background and at times integrated into the art work

13. Because your support papers are so pristine and subdued, would you wish them be replaced rather than risk possible visual noise/distraction resulting from repairs?

SB: Depending on the design of the work, at times the support is an integral part of the art

14. When is a piece “finished”?

SB: In rare exceptions – I generally know when it's finished

15. Do you feel that your pieces evolve with the passage of time as they undergo certain physical and chemical changes?

SB: With the exception of one of my paintings, I have never seen a physical or chemical change in my work

16. What would you consider each piece's "intended state" to be? Would you like your audience to see each piece as you finish them?

SB: Final – Yes

17. Is this the point to which the piece should be restored if damaged?

SB: Yes

18. When should a conservator intervene?

SB: When I cannot safely do it myself

19. To what extent should a conservator intervene?

SB: To the closest of the artist's intention

20. What level of inpainting/retouching would you like to see? (Toning, trateggio, textured, complete reintegration?)

SB: Minimum, if any is necessary

21. Your pieces have so many subtle qualities, which qualities do you wish to preserve most?

SB: To make the color and texture match the intent of the artist

22. Would you consider changing your materials if a more stable/archival substitution were available?

SB: I would proceed with great caution due to past advice and consent

23. Do your collectors (institutional and private) tend to purchase your work individually or in groups?

SB: Both

24. What clues can conservators/curators/collectors look for when restoring your work?

SB: Subtle color variations, surface interest, pristine (calm) ground support

25. Who owns the greatest number of your pieces?

SB: A corporation in Sweden and a private collector in Colorado

26. Are you aware of any treatments carried out on your work?

SB: Yes

27. What did these treatments entail?

SB: Framer had to straighten out a slightly bent support due to transit

28. Did the owner contact you for guidance?

SB: I was in touch with the owner and consequently with the framer

29. Are you pleased with the outcome?

SB: This just happened – If the owner isn't satisfied with the received art, I will contact you

30. What would you have done differently?

SB: Nothing

13.3. Transcript of Formal Video Recorded Interview:

Today is March 20, 2006, and we are speaking with Siri Berg about her artwork. Siri has several different bodies or parts or components to her body of work: paper collages, oil paintings and found object assemblages. Today we will focus primarily on the paper collages, and a bit about the oil paintings and how everything works together to inform the viewer of one another. I thought we could begin talking about how you begin a piece, and what you shop for and qualities you look for in your materials.

Um, I think when I shop for papers is when I really start designing and start to focus. What I look for in papers is the difference in highly textured quality . . . the high textured paper and also the very flat paper, so that I'm emphasizing the contrast and the opposites in the artwork. That's how it starts, just when I go shopping for the papers. And then I think after I have found the papers I start the process of the woodblock print. And when I trained in Japanese woodblock printing, I understand that in Japan you have three different people . . . three different people who . . . one is the artist who designs the piece. And the second one is the carver who carves the block. And the third is the printer, printing . . . printing. And I've taken artistic license with this and I have decided that I would do all three steps with a western mind, I would do everything. And so I do everything from beginning to end. I carve the blocks. And here you can see some of the some of the carving. And actually here you can see a piece . . . you can see a piece from the carving. Right, right, right. And this is the print with an art paper as a background, and a plywood box that works instead of a support. And if you can see the paint on the edges, this part of a modular system, this particular piece. And they all have to work together: the paintings, the collages, the assemblages from found objects. They all have to work together. There is another one that is opposite of the very intricate. Its design is very simple, very simple. Alright.

And then you have some of the papers and prints.

And I have samples to show you.

And these are all printed from the same wood block?

Yes. They are all printed. They are what is left after I made a selection for the big piece.

Right. And it seems that along with the textures of the papers you have selected, your selection of colorants and inks play a large role in the surface quality. Because you have this metallic paint and you also have flatter paint, and all of that plays into that contrasting between various elements in your collages.

I think I am very conscious in papers, or even when I paint, about the surface. And the surface interest plus color is I think the guiding force behind the work. The different, the different textures I am very conscious of, and the colors. And I really move from some that are very, very subdued, and very grey and warm and cool greys to the opposite, to going to sometimes very high colors, very bright colors. So there is the whole scale of the color wheel.

A lot of it is very subtle. Very . . .

I also like to go, again, to pit the very subtle background against a very colorful one. Just like I like to do the same thing with texture and flatness. It's the same kind of thinking. And let's go on to the tools. The tools.

Okay.

They are tools made in Japan. I like the feel of them. They are horse hair. I like it, when it feels, the big size. This for the big background. This is a smaller one. And of course, my favorite, for small ones. And I just want you to see the beauty of the way this is made. And that's for small areas, to ink small areas. Now remember, this is all water-based. In contrast to the western woodblock print method, which is oil based. This is all water based. I use watercolors or gouache, but you cannot use acrylics. And then we have what is called the baron. The baron is your press. It is the arm, this is your press. This, this is the press. And so this is the typical ones. Which if it is worn out, you can put new bamboo leaves over it. But, what startled me was one time I came across this one. And it, I think, strikes me so interesting because here we have a very modern material, plastic, and it replaces the hand-made baron. So, you get everything.

And then these are used when you are printing the woodblocks?

Yes. Yes.

And the paper goes on top? And you burnish?

Yes, the paper goes on top. But you need to put the piece of paper on there first because of the dampness. Now this paper, when this paper, it is first soaked. After it gets soaked, it gets dried with blotters. So that there has to be a built-in quality that you learn as you do it. It can't be dripping . . . it can't be too wet, and it can't be too dry. And after a while, the person who does that will learn how to evaluate the temperature of the paper so that it's just perfect. Like humidity, but not too wet, and not too dry. And the problem comes in if you want to do it again and it's drying, you have to let it dry and do it on another day because the watercolor, if you want to wet it while it's drying, it runs. Once it dries it generally is permanent. It can be an exception. But, generally when it dries for a day you can really wet it, and it won't run.

And you use multiple prints on any one sheet of paper? Not all the time, but it seems like there are various layers of colorant.

I use sometimes . . . it depends totally on the paper. You can have a print in one application. You can have that print actually work very well, and have it look good. But that's a miracle. And sometimes, you need six times until you get the one. You know, it depends on what the artist wants.

So from here, after you make your woodblock prints, you'll cut these into smaller pieces and combine them onto a larger background.

Yes, I don't have a sample of them.

Well, we have some here to look at.

Yes, they get cut up into small pieces, and then they become collages. But, this one, was a print by itself. I do make one prints that doesn't get cut up into collages. I mean it's

two different areas. And the collages made from my method of woodblock prints, and then there are the prints that obviously, hopefully, will not get cut up. Right. So, I think we want to talk about the paintings a little bit.

Well, we can talk about the modular system, and then come to the paintings. You mention that the work hangs . . . in any one exhibition space, well at the Yellow Bird Gallery for instance, you had sixteen different canvas hung together. And, they were made up of the paper collages, the oil paintings and the assemblages together.

I had . . . the Yellow Bird Gallery had a show last year (phone rings, interview pauses)

So, at the Yellow Bird Gallery, you had a piece, it was sixteen canvases that were installed as . . . do you consider that one piece?

In the modular system of mine, they are all individual pieces. My requirement is that they should stand on their own, each individual piece. But, if there are two or three or five or ten or sixteen, they obviously take on very different meaning, and their relationship to the architecture of where they are being shown, the space. So it all varies, and the only thing that they all have in common is that they are the same size and the same height. But they, the paintings and the collages made from my method of Japanese woodblock prints, and the assemblages from found industrial objects, but I may also add the pastel/oil series that I just recently made. And I think the hesitation I have there is their fragility. You know pastels are very fragile. But the intention is to have the works on paper like drawings with it. But still pastels are more fragile than oils or even collage. Because the collages you can treat or spray. And certainly the paintings are fine. But when you get into drawings and then it becomes a little more complicated.

I know that you've gone through various types of framing and display methods. The glazing of the framing can help to provide protection from human interaction or whatever other elements may be present. You have things like this plexiglass, which you call a floating space . . .

I call . . . this is called a floating air space plexi frame. And, I think it's ideally suited for my work because it has the minimum of a frame showing. It more or less has just air space and a side. But, when the work is large, it's not practical. Because shipping the large plexi frames, they're fragile. There's no problem when they're small, but when they're big, I've stopped making that frame, because the big size, they break. They're not very strong.

But you had also mentioned that you don't like the reflections.

Yes, I don't like reflections. I understand that you said that there are some very new innovations with plexi and with glass, nonglare. I'd like to experiment with that. And also I am experimenting with some plywood back support systems for the work that gets sprayed and does not require glass or plexi framing. And, I think it appeals very much to me to have unframed, you know, without the glass because of the reflections. And I even think that the nonglare that I've seen in the past is not perfect. And maybe now they have come up with much better ways. But in the past I wasn't happy looking at it, and the nonglare glass didn't really answer the problem.

Yes, there are definitely new developments. The traditional nonglare glass was etched or sandblasted glass, and it sort of diffused the light, but there was no clarity.

It actually changed the image. And I wasn't happy with that at all. So, I think it might be worth looking into that now, and checking now. Because I am working on these six large panels, for the woodblock prints, and they are new, and I am spending a lot of time working out what kind of support to put it on, how to do it that it should not warp, the panels shouldn't warp, and I haven't come up with a final conclusion, but I think you gave me some vary good ideas. So, I'm coming to the end.

I think it's wonderful that you are open to suggestions . . .

Yes.

. . . from conservators. And, not every artist wants to hear . . .

No, I do.

. . . a conservators point of view.

No, I think it's very helpful, very helpful, to actually have consulted you, spoken to you, have actually shown me that I've neglected that avenue of getting information. Absolutely. Because, you need the technical advisors to paint companies. And you certainly need to speak to a conservator about . . . I mean I'm open to it, but I might not make the final decision in the best interest of the artwork, but I think it's important to try.

Because you are also at a stage where the adhesive that you have been using, the UHU gluesticks, you can't find the one, or Pearl is not carrying the one that you always used, the one that you are most pleased with.

Right. Right.

So, you're looking for new adhesives.

I'm shopping. I am looking, because I had been using the UHU stick. And, it's wax based, and I have had no problem with it, and it has given me a free hand in collaging. It's really been very good for me. But, I do want to try methyl cellulose. And I'm going to try it, because I'll be welcoming a new method. I really hope.

And the qualities that you like about UHU is that you could place a piece and lift it, and replace it. Because a lot of, when you're positioning and creating your collages, it's not necessarily a one-shot-deal, where you lay it down, and that's where it goes.

It has to fit. With my work, it has to fit. Like I always say, like a paper carpenter. If I have to, I like to lift it up, and reposition it without damaging the work, without tearing the paper. And that's very important. And I think, I don't know, it will work. I have tried a lot of glues, but haven't really liked a lot of them. It's difficult.

Yes, when you find qualities that you like in a material, and that material is no longer available.

I think, for instance, a small piece is easier, but big pieces, you really have to experiment with a large piece before you use a certain glue, to know that's what you really want. That's a quality, and that's what you want. And I have had, I have done pieces where I've put glue on, I've glued pieces to a support, and they've had a lot of liquid in them, and they made, big wrinkles came out, and they couldn't really use it. So, you really need to find out before you put it on the artwork whether it will work. And I have used these glues and still it gave a problem after having used them for quite a while, and had not encountered problems. But there they were, making big . . . you know . . .

Creases and distortions and cockles?

Creases that you could not get out. At least I couldn't.

Like the tracing paper piece that I am treating.

Yes. Oh that was a real problem. For me, that was an unusable piece at that point, when you got a hold of it. It was not usable, because I could not remove it. And so therefore there was one piece . . . there are six, and so I decided one piece couldn't be used. But it's amazing that you could lift it up and put it back on the same support. That one.

So it will be keeping in context with the other pieces in the same series, the same backing boards, all of them.

It's nice, seems to be the same. It's lovely.

With all the original materials.

Not having smudged or faded. If I would have gotten a hold of it, it probably would have smudged.

So, have you ever been asked to treat or restore any of your own artwork?

Yes, I have done one piece. It was a large painting. And I actually talked to the technical advisor at Grumbacher. I spoke to him, and he came he helped me. He actually walked me through the whole process of sanding a triangular piece in an 84 by 84 inch piece. They are four triangles, and one, two of them were textured in oil texture, and they were fine. And two were acrylic, and I thinned the acrylic too much, and that is a common mistake to make. I hadn't added enough medium to compensate for the water. And they started to peel. And he sanded down the two triangles, it's a half a painting of 84 by 84. Picture that. He sanded them down, and I repainted them.

So, you had to repaint the entire . . .

It's the mate to the one, Coca Cola Company has one in Atlanta, in the executive dining room. But that one was perfectly fine. It was the other one. I believe that there was only one triangle there, not both. And that one was bad enough, it took a whole fall semester. I'm embarrassed to say it. I am so conscious now when I add water to paint, when I thin out paint to make sure that I add medium to it.

And it's not just conservators . . . I think you said that you spoke with the technical advisors at Grumbacher and you've also been in touch with Golden Paint.

And they've been tremendously helpful.

They are a wonderful, wonderful company.

Wonderful. And it is tremendous for an artist to have, to be able to call these sources. It's really wonderful.

It's wonderful that you take the initiative to contact them.

No, I do, I do. I speak to them, and they give me marvelous advice. But, you know you can also look up and get a lot of information at times from Ralph Mayer's book.

Yes. Yes.

You do. You do. But there's always unexpected things if you're really are trying to use unusual material. You have no precedent. You really don't.

So then, while we're talking about conservation, and restoration treatments and retouching, I wanted to know a little bit about your, what you would like to see happen with damage to your pieces. Take for instance a paper collage, if there were a paper element that had been torn or missing, conservators have various levels to which they can restore or bring that part of the image back, ranging from a simple toning, which would give a very basic visual completion to the object. We can use *tratteggio* methods, where, from a distance it is not apparent that there is a damage, but when you get close-up, there is no deception, it's very obvious where retouching has occurred in a piece. There's brushstrokes, and it works almost like *pointalism*, where to make a green, there's various blues and yellows, but you see the brushwork. And then there's also that complete reintegration and inpainting, where it's practically unnoticeable where the artist's original ends and the conservator's insert begins. And, to what level would you like to see your work restored if it is damaged?

I think in general, that would have to apply to the individual piece, about what's necessary to start out. But, my feeling is that I would like it to be unnoticeable that it has

been touched up and repaired. I think that I want total visual impact to be the benefit for the audience, the way that it was intended. Therefore I think I would like it to look as much as possible like the rest of that area or the entire piece. And, I think what I'm gathering is that conservators have the ability to copy and I think I am thoroughly impressed with that. I think I would like as much as possible to be of that quality, that you can summon up. You know, I'd like that, I like it the best. For the benefit of the audience. I think I would find it disturbing if you see a tear there. You lose the impact. You lose the impression that you get . . . I like the drama of seeing the work complete.

It seems that in your work, there are so many subtleties and juxtapositions, that an interruption, like a tear, would be very distracting . . .

Right.

. . . to the visual experience and impact.

I agree. I agree with you. That's my feeling, that it should be continued the way it . . . if it's possible, to copy it the way it was made, so that you're not aware of the repair.

That brings us to . . . actually you're a wonderful artist, because you make records and document your materials, the colors that you've used. And you have a sort of cataloging system and an indexing system, with the colors from your palette and sizes, and you make notes of all of these things which is very helpful.

I do.

So, I was wondering if you could tell us a little bit about your . . .

I like to keep records. I catalog. This is a catalog. And I haven't decided to take a commercial software yet, because I can just open to any one page, any one, that's basically the beginning where they were just drawings.

And, now you've moved on to photographs?

Yes. And these are the drawings. First they're little drawings. And it tells you . . . you know every single work of mine has a catalog number. It doesn't go out. And, if it goes to a show, or whatever event the piece has been a part of, it's the provenance of the piece is in here, the provenance. It's kind of nice to see whether it winds up with a collector, it's listed, and it's listed when. It's listed when they acquired or purchased it. And, eventually we make little, from the thumbnail sketches, I progress.

So, it looks like you have the thumbnail images, like you said, they have a catalog number, the size or the dimension of every piece, the medium, the colors, the year, the pattern, slide or photograph, problems, collector, and notes. So you really have . . .

The whole thing. And it's very customized for my needs. But . . .

There's a lot of information here.

Yes. And it gives the colors. But, I felt I really don't have it written down exactly how the piece is made. I mean, everything external is in here. It's external life, but I do have . . . oh, here they are . . . so these are the index cards. And they now repeat certain things. They have the catalog number, and they have the size of the work. And now, it gives the year. But, now the additional is the color chips, the chips that I make when I paint. When I paint, I make a chip, and that's added. That gives it a lot more information to the piece.

And, is this from the actual paint, as you're painting?

Yes.

As you paint your canvases, you make the swatches?

This is when I'm painting. This is the paint I use here, just as an example. This is this piece, these colors, these. And the texture, the color, the number, the size, the year, and whatever information I can put in, I have. These pieces here, are the edges. Now this is the colors of, for the modular system. The edges have the same color. Now the modular system, all the paintings and the collages and the assemblages, have the edge is painted the same, and they're the same color. So . . .

That helps to unify . . .

Exactly. Exactly.

. . . and hold them together.

Exactly. You're right. You got it. So, it helped to unify them.

And then here you have, I don't believe how many different shades of grey. Different shades of a similar grey.

That's right, that's nothing. And some colors. And it helps if you have to touch it up, it helps.

Right.

When did I have to touch up something? Oh, I know, I know. The big painting, the 84 inch by 84 inch painting, when we had last winter, we had an enormous rain storm. And the piece is in a private home, it apparently slipped down, but didn't fall completely. It slipped enough for the one point of that painting to burrow into the hook in the wall, and the floor. And so, I actually had someone who went out there and who hung the piece. But now we discovered that there was a little scratch, a small scratch. And all I had to do is, I had a strip of the paint colors here. And I matched it totally, completely. And so I was able to give him a little jar of the paint and a brush, and he went out and

touched it up. I didn't even have to go there. It was the perfect color. Now that's the advantage of keeping records.

Exactly.

It would have been difficult to have matched it. Or, it would have had a big, big area that would have had to have been matched. That's already a major touch-up.

If the color couldn't have been matched, you end up repainting the majority of it.

The other colors wouldn't have matched. So, no, it was exactly the right color. And I had saved, I didn't save the paint. But, I saved the chip. And I could match the chip completely.

So, you've been using the same brands of materials then through the years? Or you're able to match the colors even though, say maybe . . .

That's a good question. That's a very good question. I think I probably use the same colors for the same painting if I keep a record. I do, some of the paint, I put it into my own tubes. I open up the back, and I fill them, too. And the oil paint, you see, it stays. This is years, and it stays. Whereas watercolors, if you order them, they get hard. But, the oil paint, you could use this for years. So, in some instances, I have the color. But in that case, I didn't. But I was able to mix a perfect match.

So, is there anything else you would like to share with me, or with the conservation world?

Probably a lot. Probably a lot. But, um, I think about brushes, you know, soft brushes, hard brushes, bristle. It depends what you're doing. It really depends what you want to paint on. Whether you use canvas board, canvas, linen. And each time you change it,

it's exciting to me. It really is. You know, because it's something new. It's a whole adventure. That's what painting is all about.

So, even changing one element, whether it be the brush, the color . . .

It's adventure, and it's also a marvelous escape from daily living. It really is. I mean people often are laughing, and talking about how therapeutic it is. But, it basically is, I think. That's all I can tell you. It's very helpful.

Your work is beautiful.

Thank you.

Thank you for making it. Thank you for taking this time.

I hope that I can keep making it, and keeping it . . . you know, you don't have to intend to make it beautiful. Because, you can intend to make it ugly. But, it all depends what's in your mind, what you want to do. If you want to make it beautiful, it will turn out beautiful. Sometime when I make paintings, I feel they come out more dramatic than the collages. Now, I don't know whether they do. You tell me. But, I think that the collages, to me, are easier. They're a little bit more playful. Whereas the paintings, I always think they come out more dramatic. More drama. I think I like to keep it like that, so I can go from one to the other. I can. I get bored. I like to work small. If I work small for a long time, I feel a real desire to work big. Like those six panels. But, when I work large for a long time, I may be very happy to sit with a small, a series of small pieces. They could be a series of studies for future work. Then I pick from those, if I have maybe a dozen. I select. I may not like all twelve, I may like three to get a start. While I'm working on those three, I have more ideas of what to do with those three. I like to work in series, and have . . . it doesn't mean I always do. I do not. But at times, I like it that they make stories. And I think, it's not always, but at times, from the development from one to the

other, or from three or four, it makes a story. And sometimes you just have a single piece. It's really, you know, like life. It changes.

The last time I was here, I remember you speaking about being in the moment, or if the mood strikes you, if something comes out, and after the fact, it's impossible to recreate it, because that moment has passed.

I can't do it anymore. You know, I had that happen. I had that piece that was 60 inches by 60 inches, it sold. And a week later, a couple came in, who had seen it within the year, and wanted to see it again. And it was gone. And we decided that I would make something similar. I knew that I couldn't make it the same. But, it turned out totally different. I couldn't even make it similar. It was amazing. I couldn't. If I had tried, I couldn't. It's amazing. I don't understand it. There are certain things that you are willing to let them go, but you don't understand it, but that's the way it is. Okay. Okay. Thank you for your interest in my work. I thank you. I thank you very much. Really, for taking the interest, and taking the time to look at the work, and how you feel about it. I appreciate that a lot.

Thank you so much for giving me your time.

It's my pleasure.

It's been wonderful. Congratulations, Siri.

Thank you.

13.4. Siri Berg's Resume

SOLO EXHIBITIONS

2005 Metaphor Contemporary Art , Ideal;

2005 Selections from the American Abstract

2005 Artists Association, Brooklyn, NY

- 2004 Sydney, Australia, Australian National
- 2004 Maritime Museum, 2005 Year of Swedish
- 2003 Design Seminar
- 2003 Beijing, China, Pickled Art Gallery
- 2003 Valencia, Spain, Color Elefante
- 2002 Berlin Kunstprojekt, Berlin, Germany
- 2000 Konstnarshuset Stockholm, Sweden
- 2000 Swedish American Museum Chicago, IL -
- 1999 "Critic's Choice" + review Allen Artner
- 1999 -Chicago Tribune
- 2000 ETS (Educational Testing Service),
- 1995, Princeton, NJ
- 97, 99 Consul General of Sweden Olle Wastberg
- 1997 official residence NYC
- 1997 Rutgers University, Mary H. Dana
- 1992 Woman Artists Series, New Brunswick,
- 1990, NJ
- 92 Hallwyl Museum, Stockholm, Sweden
- 1991 The Museum of the Southwest, Midland,
- 1989, TX
- 90 The American Swedish Museum,
- 1990 Philadelphia, PA
- 1986, Walter Wickiser Gallery, NYC
- 87 The Robert C Williams American
- 1986 Museum of Paper Making, Atlanta, GA
- 1981 Westbrook Gallery, Georgia Institute of
- 1976 Technology, Atlanta, GA
- 1976 Galerie Konstruktiv Tendens, Stockholm,
- Sweden
- Elaine Benson, Bridgehampton, NY
- Yeshiva University Museum, NYC

Alena Adlung Gallery, NYC

QCC Art Gallery of CUNY: Top Award

"8th Annual Works on Paper"

Paula Allen Gallery, NYC

The American Swedish Museum,

Philadelphia, PA

American Scandinavian Foundation,

NYC

Debel Gallery, Jerusalem, Israel

Cultural Center, US State Department,

Jerusalem, Israel

SELECTED GROUP SHOWS

- 2005 Broadway Gallery, "Engaging the
- 2004 Structural" curator Julie Karabenick
- 2004 Broadway Gallery "Fall Bloom", curator
- 2003 David Markus
- 2002 SWEA 25 Jubileum exhibition
- 2002 Millesgarden, Lidingo Sweden
- 2002 Southwest State University, William
- 2002 Whipple Gallery, "Works On Paper",
- 2000 Marshall, MN
- Southwest State University, William
- 1998 Whipple Gallery, "Master Paintings and
- Woodcuts", Marshall, MN
- 1997 The Martin Gallery, Muhlenberg College,
- American Abstract Artists: "Abstract
- 1995 Dilemmas", Allentown, PA
- 1994 Monique Goldstrom Gallery, "The
- 1993 -Elements of Geometry", NYC
- 98 The Workspace, "Blobs, Wiggles and
- Dots, Webs and Crustallations..." curator

- 1993 Lucio Pozzi, NYC
- 1991 -A.I.R. "Generations II: A Survey of
99 Women Artists At the Millennium"
- 1988 Maryland Federation of Art "Art On
Paper", P. Rosensweig, Curator,
- 1986 Hirshhorn Museum, Annapolis, MD
- 1980 Federal Reserve Bank, NYC
- 1979 Maryland Federation of Art "Art On
1978 Paper", E. Rathbone, Chief Curator,
- 1976 -Phillips Collection, Annapolis, MD
- 77 McLean Gallery "Inaugural Show",
Malibu, CA
- Fay Gold Gallery "Four Women Artists",
Atlanta, GA
- Thomas Nordenstad Gallery, "Identity &
Illusion, a Tribute to Ingmar Bergman",
NYC
- Borough of Manhattan Community
College "The Universe as Collage",
Shirley Fitterman Gallery, NYC
- Yeshiva University Museum "Aishet
Hayil: A Woman of Valor" traveling
show
- Bezalel Academy of Arts and Design,
Morris Louis Gallery, Jerusalem, Israel
(12/97 - 4/98)
- The Willias Gallery "Computer Age Fine
Art", Princeton, NJ
- Galerie Konstruktiv Tendens "Geometric
Abstractions", Stockholm, Sweden
- Galerie Fontainas "Richesse du Papeir",

Brussels, Belgium

Hillier Group "Reflections on

Technology", Princeton, NJ

Fay Gold Gallery "Architectural Images
in Art", Atlanta, GA

Birmingham Museum "The Silvia Pizitz
Collection", Birmingham, AL

Pace University Gallery "Unknown
Universes", NYC

Bridge Gallery "Art for Public Places",
NYC

The Aldrich Museum "Contemporary
Reflections", Ridgefield, CT

SELECTED COLLECTIONS

The Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum,
NYC

New York University, Gray Art Gallery
Collection, NYC

Herbert F. Johnson Museum, Cornell
University, Ithaca, NY

The Jewish Museum, NYC

Pace University Collection, NYC

University of Alabama, Birmingham

Birmingham Museum of Art, Alabama

Israel Museum, Jerusalem, Israel

John Naisbitt, "Megatrends"

Dr. and Mrs. Raymond Sackler

Hon. Consul General of Sweden Olle

Wastberg and Inger Claesson Wastberg,
NY

Arne Thoren, IBM, AT&T, Revlon,

Wang Industries, Chemical Bank, GCI
International
Chase Manhattan Bank, Public Service
Mutual, The Reuben H. Donnelley Co.
Svenska Handelsbanken, Scanoil, Ann
Stern, KREAB Group, PKBanken Gloria
Vanderbilt for Murjani
Deloitte & Touche, Seidman & Seidman,
Sanford C. Bernstein Co. Inc.
Georgia Institute of Technology, Atlanta,
GA
Intl. Transport Finance ltd.
Air Touch Communication, Washington
DC Headquarters
The Coca Cola Company, Atlanta
Headquarters

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

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BIOGRAPHY

Born: Stockholm, Sweden

Education: B.A. Institute of Art and

Architecture, University of Brussels, Pratt
Graphics Center